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REPORT (PART II)
ON
NATIVE-OWNED ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS IN BENGAL
FOR THE
Week ending Saturday, 17th May 1902.

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II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.

(a)—Police.

685. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* is of opinion that it is futile to talk of reforming the police by the mere importation of a better class of men, as long as (1) they are encouraged to concoct cases and haul up innocent men or men against whom there is no evidence, and (2) influence is brought to bear upon the Subordinate Magistracy to convict by the District Superintendent, the District Magistrate and even the Government.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
6th May 1902.

"So long as the Magistracy and the police consider that they belong to one family—so long as the Government upholds this policy—so long as a passion for conviction prevails—the police will go on oppressing the people. Let the police know that it is better for them not to send up men at all for trial than to send up those against whom there is no sufficient proof. Let them also realise that their main duty lies in affording protection to the weak against the strong and the innocent against the guilty. And when such a policy will have been introduced, it will then be possible for the people to save themselves from the harassment and oppression of the police."

686. The *Bengalee* publishes a letter addressed by the people of Kishoreganj to the District Magistrate of Mymensingh, pointing out the prevalence of theft, burglary and lawlessness on the part of *badmashes* in that town, and hopes the District Magistrate will promptly respond to the prayers of the petitioners and incite the police, who are not so vigilant as they should be, to greater activity.

BENGALIEE,
10th May 1902.

(b).—Working of the Courts.

687. The *Hindoo Patriot* refers to the order of the District Magistrate of Jessore, which it publishes, to the Subdivisional Officer of Jhenida, stopping all further proceedings against the Inspector of Jhenida in two cases under section 500, Indian Penal Code. The action of the District Magistrate is, it says, in direct violation of the High Court's orders No. 2 of the 16th June 1900, and the Lieutenant-Governor should take steps to maintain the dignity of the High Court on the one hand, and at the same time awaken his District Officers to a sense of their duty. Cases of this sort are not infrequent in the mufassal, and point, says the *Patriot*, to the urgency of separating the executive from the judicial functions.

HINDOO PATRIOT,
10th May 1902.

688. The *Bengalee* learns that the Munsifs of Howrah have recently passed an order that in all cases where persons other than plaintiffs verify the complaints, they should satisfy the Court as to their knowledge of the facts of the case by an affidavit bearing a Court-fee stamp worth one rupee, and that the pleaders of the Howrah Court have petitioned the District Judge of Hooghly in a body against the action of the Munsifs, the effect of which will be a considerable augmentation of the revenue from the sale of Court-fee stamps.

BENGALIEE,
11th May 1902.

The *Bengalee* is quite sure the matter will receive proper consideration at the hands of the District Judge. It is apparent that an affidavit of the sort was not up till now thought necessary, and it is curious that it should be thought so now.

(c)—Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.

689. The *Bengalee* calls attention to the case brought up on appeal before the High Court in which one Chandra Kumar Biswas successfully sought to have the order of the Municipal Magistrate directing the destruction of 25,000 maunds of damaged rice set aside.

BENGALIEE,
5th May 1902.

As the High Court Judges pointed out there was no evidence that the rice was brought to any place of sale for human food, whereas there was sufficient evidence on record that the article was brought for sale as food for pigs; yet, says the *Bengalee*, the Magistrate in the exercise of plenary powers, which a Draconian Code vests him with, ordered the destruction of 25,000

maunds of a merchant's commodity, little knowing that there are persons, though their number is limited, who would appeal to a higher tribunal against his arbitrary order.

"The case is not without a moral. It proves that it is hard to obtain that even-handed justice in the Municipal Court which the public have a right to expect. It proves that the Municipal Court cannot, under the present circumstances, be strong in the dispensation of that fair and impartial justice, which is the corner-stone of British Indian administration. It proves to how much loss, discomfort and annoyance an innocent rate-payer may be subjected at the hands of the Municipal Executive, enjoying an unwonted immunity under the protection of their own Court. We repeat what we said before; if the Government is at all anxious to inspire confidence and to conciliate public opinion—though in the present case it is Indian public opinion—it should lose no time to reconstitute the Municipal Court, by making it a part and parcel of the ordinary City Magistracy under the control and guidance of the Chief Magistrate, removed from the atmosphere of the Municipal Office."

HINDOO PATRIOT,
8th May 1902.

690. The *Hindoo Patriot* defends the Municipal Magistrate of Calcutta from the attacks of the *Bengalee*. It says:—

The Municipal Magistrate of Calcutta.

Our contemporary describes the Court as a municipal engine for drawing money. Would he be surprised to learn that the total fines inflicted last year were less than the total amount inflicted by the Presidency and Suburban Magistrates combined in the previous year before the Court came into existence? He calls the court a limb of the Municipal Executive: yet is he aware how many municipal officers have come to grief and been punished departmentally for being concerned in shady transactions which the Magistrate felt it his duty to expose? Only lately a Municipal Commissioner was properly rated and the officers whom he had influenced were not spared either.

INDIAN MIRROR,
9th May 1902.

691. The *Indian Mirror*, referring to the case of Babu Debendra Nath

Babu Debendra Nath Dutt,
Municipal Commissioner.

Dutt, the Municipal Commissioner, on whose character the Municipal Magistrate of Calcutta, recently made certain reflections, learns that the Municipal Corporation has refused to take any action in the matter.

"That is strange," says the *Mirror*. "We have no further comment to make on what appears to be a "glaring scandal."

(g)—*Railways and Communications, including Canals and Irrigation.*

BENGALIEE,
7th May 1902.

692. The following paragraph appears in the *Bengalee*:—

The Station Master of Begu-sarai.

We have received numerous complaints against the present Station Master of Begusarai. Only the other day the pointsmen, in a body, tendered their resignation to the District Traffic Superintendent by wire. We understand an inquiry has been held into the matter by the Traffic Inspector. We sincerely trust this time justice will be done to the subordinate staff. The easiest course will be to remove the Station Master to some unimportant station.

(h)—*General.*

BEHAR NEWS,
3rd May 1902.

693. The *Behar News* concludes, in the following words, an enquiry into this subject:—

The poverty of India: its causes.

"In the discouragement of sciences suited to the genius of the country, in the general wreck of arts, manufactures and trades, in the heavy annual drain in the shape of home charges upon the slender resources of the country, in the practical blocking up for the natives of all the avenues to wealth, we can find enough and to spare of the causes of India's poverty."

MOSLEM CHRONICLE,
3rd May 1902.

694. In a lengthy article, the *Moslem Chronicle* attempts to demonstrate

Ibid.

that, in spite of the assertion by the Government that India is growing wealthier and the people more prosperous, the condition of the masses is becoming worse and worse daily, and the struggle for existence more and more severe. The *Chronicle* traces the cause of this deterioration to the foreign drain, the expending of India's

money out of India, the existing system of education and the absence of all endeavour to develop the resources of the country and preserve her industries.

695. The *Behar News* hails with delight the movement set on foot in the Punjab, of which it learns from the *Akbar-i-Am* of Lahore, to appeal to the King on the occasion

BEHAR NEWS,
3rd May 1902.

Kine-killing.

of his coronation to stop kine killing, the source of annual strife between Hindus and Muhammadans in India.

The *News* exhorts the Government to move in this matter on the grounds of utility and decency.

696. The *Indian Mirror* points to the speech of the Maharaja of Darbhanga delivered at Gauhati, as the best public appreciation of Mr. Cotton that ever was accorded

INDIAN MIRROR,
4th May 1902.

An appreciation of Mr. Cotton.

to any retiring official.

This appreciation was delivered, says the journal, with the Maharaja's characteristic eloquence and courage—courage, because he was speaking in language of high eulogy of a man, whom the non-official European community had vilified, and whom the Supreme Government had thrown overboard.

697. The retirement of Mr. Cotton has, says the *Indian Empire*, been entirely due to the attitude of the Government of India with regard to his remarks on the relation

INDIAN EMPIRE,
6th May 1902.

Mr. Cotton's retirement.

between the planters and their coolies. His disagreement with the Government of India arose during the discussion, in the Viceroy's Council, of the Labour Bill when Mr. Cotton had the boldness to decline point blank to be a party to the infamous concordat, brought about by Mr. Buckingham, representative of the planters, and accepted by the Viceroy, which deprived the coolies for two years to come, the little increase to their pay which the Act sanctioned."

Mr. Cotton's lot, says the *Empire*, has been the lot of many a great man before, as, for instance, Lord Ripon.

698. The following is taken from a leader in the *Bengalee* on the demonstrations held in honour of the retiring Chief Commissioner of Assam :—

BENGALUR,
8th May 1902.

A demonstration to Mr. Cotton.

"The rich and the poor, the high and the low, the prince and the peasant are alike interested in doing honour to Mr. Cotton, for they realize in him the noblest embodiment of those principles of Anglo-Indian administration which alone can conciliate the people and consolidate the Government. If the voice of the people count for aught in the selection of their Lieutenant-Governor, they would welcome him with one universal acclaim as the ruler of their choice. So strong is this feeling that it found most emphatic expression in the utterances of the two Presidents of the two demonstrations in honour of Mr. Cotton in the two Provinces of Bengal and Assam. Both the Maharaja of Darbhanga and Maharaja Sir Jotindra Mohan Tagore gave emphatic expression to the hope that Mr. Cotton may come back as the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. These noblemen have echoed the national voice in this matter. Will the people's hopes be realized—will their fondest anticipations be given effect to? There could be no question that it would be wise to do so. But the rulers of men are not always sagacious or far-seeing. At any rate, we shall continue to indulge in the fond hope that in this case wisdom will not forsake them until the hour of disillusionment comes, if come it must."

699. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* explains that the secret of Mr. Cotton's popularity lay in his sympathy with the people and in his treating them differently to what they

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
9th May 1902.

Mr. Cotton's popularity.

were accustomed. Is Mr. Cotton, it asks, to be the last of the officials who succeeded in winning the affections of the people of this country by sympathy?

"There are others who think that this absolute surrender on the part of the Indians may raise champions for them among Englishmen. Thus we have our Hume, Wedderburn, Roberts, Caine, and Digby. The stand made by Mr. Connybeare at the Indian Famine Union meeting, very much pleased the people here. And India has got a champion somewhat like Mr. Bradlaugh himself, in Mr. Weir, who moved a resolution that every Indian State should have a self-governing constitution."

BENGALIEE,
10th May 1902.

700. The following is taken from the *Bengalee* :—

An ill-equipped hospital.

What is the good, we ask, of keeping that proverbial White Elephant—we mean the Bhawanipur Shumbhu Nath Pandit Hospital—if it cannot justify its *raison d'être* and minister unto the needs of the people? We are told that on Tuesday night last a patient was taken to the Hospital apparently suffering from poisoning for admission. But strangely enough, admission was refused on the ground that the Hospital had not the necessary apparatus needed for the treatment of the patient. The patient had, therefore, to be taken all the way to Alipore where he was admitted. We wonder if local hospitals are kept up as mere shows—for shows they undoubtedly are if they cannot, in cases of emergency, render the people timely help. The Bhawanipur people have a just grievance, and we hope the attention of the authorities will be drawn to the Hospital, and that it will ere long be equipped with all the necessary apparatus to enable it to give the local people that scientific aid for which it apparently exists.

POWER AND GUARDIAN,
4th May 1902.

701. *Power and Guardian* mentions a case in which Mr. Ryan, District Superintendent of Police, Rajshahi, deliberately rode his horse over some *Muharram* processionists at Rampur Boalia, hurting people promiscuously, and hopes that the Lieutenant-Governor will take suitable notice of that officer's conduct, though judging from His Honour's failure to take action in the cases of Mr. Vernéde, Mr. Marr, Mr. Temple, and Mr. Hallifax, an impression prevails that Sir John is "not prepared to mete out strict justice to European delinquents in the same fearless manner that Mr. Cotton has done."

HINDOO PATRIOT,
6th May 1902.

702. Commenting on Lord Curzon's speech on the Budget, in which His Excellency expressed the opinion that the utmost that the Head of a Government could effect was to hand over the administrative machine to his successor with all its parts intact, &c., the *Hindoo Patriot* says that these words have filled it with misgivings, as denoting an absence of that confidence which has hitherto inspired His Excellency's supporters and admirers. The time left to Lord Curzon to accomplish the reforms he has in contemplation is short indeed, the money required is vast. These considerations compel the writer to doubt the ultimate success of His Excellency's various projects.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
8th May 1902.

703. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* publishes the judgment of the District Magistrate of Simla, dismissing the case brought against Babu Mela Ram, President of the Simla Arya Samaj, of kidnapping a famine waif, and expresses the opinion that the judgment deals with the case in a very fair spirit. It wishes, however, that the Magistrate had made some strong remarks against the conduct of those who, in the name of philanthropy, put innocent men to trouble and expense. He should also have condemned the conduct of those officials who made common cause with the complainant and used Government money and influence to put down the accused.

BENGALIEE,
11th May 1902.

704. Referring to this case, the *Bengalee* asks: Who is responsible for the trouble and expense to which Mr. Mela Ram was subjected, and the imprisonment which he had to suffer? If the complainant was not a European lady, would some of the local European officials and the police have taken this inordinate interest in the case, and would Mr. Mela Ram have been refused bail? The Arya Samaj should not be satisfied with the dismissal of the case. The Samaj should submit a representation to His Excellency the Viceroy, setting forth the facts of the case, and praying that His Excellency may take such action as in His Excellency's opinion the justice of the case may demand. Where the interests of justice are involved, His Excellency is no respecter of persons.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
8th May 1902.

705. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* thinks it is altogether wrong to include defamation in the category of criminal offences. A wrong done by the pen or the tongue should not be punished by imprisonment. As a matter of fact, in other countries criminal libels are almost unknown. The one main reason why a criminal defamation gives a fright to the Editor here is the inexperience of the trying Magistrate.

In other countries it is a jury which tries defamation cases, but in India they are tried by Magistrates, some of whom are so young that they have scarcely passed the kite-flying stage of their life.

706. The following paragraph is taken from the *Indian Mirror*:—

INDIAN MIRROR,
8th May 1902.

The colonisation of South Africa.

Sir Lepel Griffin's pleadings notwithstanding, and notwithstanding the so-called influential support to his proposals, he is reported to have received, his scheme of colonisation of the conquered South African countries is likely to be shelved. In Natal the "coolies" were "sons of the Empire." But that was, as we feared and wrote, a brief acknowledgment of service in a moment of gush. The Indian settlers are once more coolies with fewer rights than those appertaining to the very dogs of the "white" settlers. The narrative is too sickening to be repeatedly put forth. In this light, we would ask our readers if they make much or little of the telegraphic intelligence on the subject of the inducements held out to Indians to settle with their families in East Africa:—

For our part, the news brings us no elation—just the contrary. Pampered first-kicked for ever afterwards. Labour is needed, and temptations are provided. The situation just means this in plain language—the whiteman will neither hew wood nor draw water, the menial service will be done by the Indian, and when the land has been cleared and beautified, the "white" will step in and the Indian "may go hang." That is Imperialism!

707. The *Bengalee* ventilates the grievances under which the jetty staff labour in respect of holidays and overtime allowance, as embodied in a memorial they have drawn up and which is published, and trusts that the grievances will be removed.

BENGALUR,
8th May 1902.

The jetty staff.

708. The action of the Mahant of Tarkeswar in ordering a survey of the land lying about lot Krishnapore, held by him under the Burdwan Raj, is, says the *Indian Mirror*,

INDIAN MIRROR,
9th May 1902.

The Mahant of Tarkeswar.

causing the greatest uneasiness and apprehension among the people of the neighbourhood, as the men employed by the Mahant are reported to be proceeding with the work of measurement in lands lying outside the limits of the Mahant's property, and often without any previous intimation, with the result that great oppression has been practised upon womenfolk. Things have reached such a pass that a breach of the peace can no longer be avoided, on which account the journal appeals to the Government to step in and put a stop to the vagaries which are being practised upon law-abiding people.

709. India's chief ground for demanding reform is, says the *Behar Herald*, the desperate poverty of her people, especially the peasantry. Their average income

BEHAR HERALD,
7th May 1902.

India's claim for reform.

is Rs. 20 annually, out of which Rs. 3 are taken in taxation. Proportionately to income the Indian agriculturist of the British Crown is taxed more than four times more than his Scottish brother and three times higher than his English compeer. Being in a chronic state of indebtedness, his slender income goes to the money-lender, and thus there exists a score or two millions of disappointed men in British India, more suffering, more hungry, with more insufficiently clothed bodies, wasted lives and stunted bodies than are to be found the world over. Yet the *Herald* admits there were *sowcars* previous to British rule in India, but their presence hurt no one. Village panchayats settled any disputes and inability to pay.

"But with the enlightened rule of the British Government, all this was to cease. Brimful of philanthropy, our rulers could not let well alone, or indeed believe that anything could be well done for others, which was not in accordance with what they thought good for themselves. With their innovations, the exotic systems of land and law, they have dissolved the bonds of society, turned peace into war, assayed every class against that on which it is most dependent—capitalist against landholders—landlords against tenants. These are some of the reasons why the Indian cultivator is poor and the kernel of Indian reform, must, we think, lie here, in the use of law and money to strengthen the wretchedly weak earning power of the Indian peasantry."

IV.—NATIVE STATES.

710. The *Moslem Chronicle* explains that under the treaties of 1853 and 1861 the province of Berar was assigned to the British Government by the Nizam of Hyderabad as

MOSLEM CHRONICLE,
3rd May 1902.

The Berars.

security for the payment of the British troops stationed at Hyderabad for the safety of the Nizam's dominions. The Nizam had failed to pay the amount due for several years, and the accumulated arrears had swelled to a considerable figure. Thus Berar was ceded to the British Government to be administered as a 'trust.' Time and again the Hyderabad Government has tried to get back the province, but the policy of the British Government has been one of prevarication and procrastination.

It is now stated that the Nizam has been asked by the Viceroy himself to give up the Berars to the British Government in perpetual lease on a yearly subsidy of 25 lakhs, but as out of this sum the Hyderabad Government will be required to repay the British Government the loan of 3½ crores due to it, it will be quite 25 years before the subsidy will be of any benefit to Hyderabad. It is in this connection that the *Chronicle* characterizes as significant that part of His Excellency the Viceroy's speech at Hyderabad in which Lord Curzon, as it says, attempted to lay the butter on. It views the Government action in this matter as mandatory, and extremely questionable and impolitic, and considers that it has evoked a spirit of doubt and distrust in the Feudatory States of India.

V.—PROSPECTS OF THE CROPS AND CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

BENGALER,
10th May 1902.

711. The *Bengalee* says that, in view of the widespread devastation caused by the tornado in East Bengal, especially in some villages in the Narainganj subdivision, it is clearly the duty of the Government to come forward and supplement private charity with its aid.

VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

MOSLEM CHRONICLE,
3rd May 1902.

712. The *Moslem Chronicle* notes with pleasure the efforts of Mr. Amrita Lal Mukerji, Subdivisional Officer of Barasat, 24-Parganas, in co-operation with the Muhammadan community to repair and preserve an old historial mosque at Kanchrapara, built 212 years ago. This praiseworthy scheme of the Hindu officer will, it says, go far towards bridging the gulf between the two communities.

OFFICE OF THE INSPR.-GENERAL
OF POLICE, L. P.,
WRITERS' BUILDINGS,
The 17th May 1902.

H. B. ST. LEGER,
Asst. to the Insp.-General of Police, L. P.